

National Aeronautics and Space Administration



R&A Charge to SMD Advisory Committees

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Planetary Science Advisory Committee

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Two questions to be asked of the ACs

1. Does the SMD R&A program have effective processes in place to solicit, review and select high-impact/high-risk projects?
2. Does the SMD R&A program have effective processes in place to solicit, review and select focused, interdisciplinary, and interdivisional projects?

Background

It's always good practice to periodically step back and review processes to gain insight and spot new opportunities.

This task has been formulated by SMD (Front Office, Division Directors, R&A Leads & Division Advisory Committee Exec Secs) and the NAC Science Committee (SC) so has broad acceptance at HQ.

Ideal task for the new SMD Division Advisory Committees (ACs) and the NAC SC:

- ◆ ACs set up to tackle short term, discrete questions and produce actionable advice directed to the right levels.
- ◆ NAC SC Chair has sent a letter to the SC members including the Chairs of the four ACs that emphasizes the importance of the committees' answers to the R&A charge

Practicalities

Asks the SMD advisory committees to work on the “how” of these inquiries, not the “why.” The advice delivered should address the issues at a tactical use-focused level, rather than focusing on generalities at a strategic level.

Series of sub-questions exist under each question; each will be addressed in the response

Opportunity to offer ideas that NASA SMD may not have considered

Extensive materials provided by NASA to provide a basis for responding to the questions

Working Definitions

High-Impact: Research whose outcome, if confirmed, would have a substantial and measureable effect on current thinking, methods or practice.

High-Risk: Research that tests novel and significant hypotheses for which there is scant precedent or preliminary data or that are counter to the existing scientific consensus.

Are these definitions good enough to start with?
How can they be improved?

Multidisciplinary: Research in which contributions from two or more different disciplines *are independently or sequentially applied, providing additive contributions* to the solution of a common problem.

Interdisciplinary: Research in which contributions from two or more different disciplines *are jointly applied, providing interactive contributions* to the solution of a common problem.

Interdivisional: Research that simultaneously advances the strategic objectives of more than one SMD Division. Such research may be multi- or inter-disciplinary but need not be.

The ACs will be asked to improve these definitions, if they see fit to do so.

Schedule

Utilize up to 2 AC meetings, Due July 2018

NLT March: AC meeting overview presentation of the R&A charge, a unified SMD presentation with common messages that is being made to each committee. AC may choose to begin to prepare, deliberate and approve response.

March – July: If needed, AC meeting or telecon to prepare, deliberate and approve R&A charge response.

By Mid – July: Provide AC R&A charge response presentation to the DD, with option of also providing a letter.

July 16-17 (tent): Chair of each AC is requested to provide the R&A charge response presentation to the NAC SC as an informational report.

Questions?

Schedule

~~July – November (5 months); 2 AC meetings~~

~~July 1: Release of charge and materials from SMD AA to the SC, and from each DD to the division advisory committee.~~

~~Early July: Committee Chairs send the charge and materials to members in advance of first meeting~~

~~July – Sept: First committee meeting with work on the charge. Unified SMD presentation with common messages will be made to each committee. Committees review information and begin deliberations. Sub-group may be formed for interim work.~~

~~Sept – Oct: Second division committee meeting with work on the charge, deliberate and produce written answers (could be recs/findings). Each committee is requested to provide a presentation to the DD, as well as a letter.~~

~~Nov: Chair of each division committee is requested to make a presentation at the SC meeting. SC deliberates and produces written answers (could be recs/findings). SC Chair provides a summary and overview presentation to the SMD AA, as well as a letter.~~

~~SMD will gladly work with the Division Advisory Committees to accommodate scheduling issues/adjustments.~~